Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1779 - September 16 2011

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1779 with a release date of Friday, September 16th, 2011 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Ham radio comes to the aid of San Diego when a power black-out takes down a part of the areas emergency service communications network, a new Red Cross emergency team down-under seeks alliances with amateur radio, Puerto Rico originates its first ever EAS message, the ARRL seeks information on young hams in the 21st century and Amateur Radio Newsline become a part of Ham Nation on TWIT.TV. Find out the details are on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1779 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAM COMES TO THE AID OF SAN DIEGO WHEN ITS FAIL SAFE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM FAILS

A ham radio operator uses his knowledge of two-way radio to supplement communications when power goes out and a failsafe 800 MHz system fails. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in the newsroom with the details:

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According to news reports, the power mains problem began near Yuma, Arizona. Affected by the September 8th black-out were parts on Southern California, South-Western Arizona and Northern Mexico. All of these areas share the same power grid and in Southern California alone some 8 million customers lost electric service. And when the lights went out in San Diego, so did parts of the regions 800 MHz shared emergency communications network.

The problem that arose was that in some North County service areas mobiles in the field could not hear their dispatchers. In other places the dispatchers could not communicate with mobile stations. But thanks to some thoughtful planning by North County Fire Battalion Chief Don Stevens, KF6ATL, a combination of ham radio know-how and an ageing commercial VHF radio system, not all was lost:

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KF6ATL: "Probably 15 years ago most of the Fire Departments in North San Diego County were on the VHF system. Subsequent to that, San Diego County, fot inter-operability reasons built a regional communications that they call the RDS system. It's a Motorola system like other Motorola systems throughout the United States.

"Before we went to the system we are dispatched on at present, we were one of the last holdouts to go onto the 800 MHz system. And when we did that, one of the decisions that a couple of us made was not only to keep our (VHF) licenses, but also to turn our then remote-base

transmitters into repeaters. We felt that we were not going to do what a lot of other cities did and that was to completely get rid of their VHF infrastructure all together."

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Stevens tells Newsline that while his department is a part of the county wide 800 MHz system, when the switchover took place he decided to keep the San Diego North County VHF system as a back-up:

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KF6ATL: "We had about 6 or 7 frequencies licensed to what was then the Fallbrook Fire Department which is now the North County Fire Department, and slowly but surely I took those licenses and turned three of them into what we call "Command Channels" or "Command Frequencies" and we strategically located them on mountaintops throughout North San Diego County.

"One of the first repeaters we put up was at a place called Buffalo Bump. Its on Camp Pendleton. It was followed by a same-licensed repeater up on Palomar Mountain and then another frequency located on Red Mountain, all within eye-sight of Fallbrook.

"And then I have one other repeater that bI consider a low level repeater located in downtown Fallbrook."

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That forward planning by KF6ATL paid off then the power failure hit:

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KF6ATL: "I was off on the day that the 800 MHz failure occurred with the power outage. Luckilly, one of my counterparts who works for the city of San Marcos - Dave Schloss - recognized that there was a failure - and like myself - he realized that we needed to do something with our 800 system to have redundancy. So he reacted quickly and called the Dispatch Center and started moving all the traffic over to my North County Fire VHF repeaters."

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We asked Stevens if his experience as a radio amateur helped in the pre-planning of the North County VHF radio back up system:

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KF6ATL: "Pretty much everything that I've done, Iv'e done myself. I've taught myself how to program repeaters. The only thing that I didn't do was was to hang the antennas."

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In the end, Stevens hopes other communities will do as his did and make certain that some sort of back up emergency radio system is in place.

This, just in case the unthinkable happens and the primary system fails.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the studio in Los Angeles.

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If nothing else, this is another incident that proves putting all emergency communications eggs into a single, supposedly fail-safe system can very easily fail is not a very good idea. (CGC, ARNewsline(tm))

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RESCUE RADIO: NEW RED CROSS EMCOMM GROUP DOWN-UNDER

A new Emergency Communications Network has recently been set up by the architects of Australia's Red Cross Emergency Communications known by the acronym RECOM. The RECOM organizational and technical model adopted in 1997 has been extremely successful in its work with Red Cross, and RECOM would now like to offer the new network infrastructure to other similarly setup amateur emergency communications organizations. You can find out more about this new network in an article by Phil Wait, VK2DKN, which can be found at tinyurl.com/3ccbys8 (WIA)

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RESCUE RADIO: PUERTO RICE ORIGINATES IRS FIRST EAS NESSAGE

For the first time ever the government of Puerto Rico originated an Emergency Alert System message during the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

According to FEMA Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Program Manager Manny Centeno, Puerto Rico had previously used NOAA Weather Radio to originate E-A-S alerts. Centeno noted that broadcasters and cable operators helped the Puerto Rico Emergency Management Agency transmit a message on August 24th.

The hurricane hit the island on August 21st and 22nd, leaving more than one million residents without power.

The Emergency Alert System or EAS is a national warning system in the United States put into place in January of 1997. This, when it superseded the Emergency Broadcast System which in turn had superseded the original CONELRAD System. In addition to alerting the public of local weather emergencies such as hurricanes, tornadoes and flash floods, the E-A-S is designed to enable the President of the United States to speak to the citizenry within 10 minutes. However, to date the nationwide federal EAS has never been activated. (RW)

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RESCUE RADIO: CANWARN NET ACTIVATED FOR HURRICANE MARIA

I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, back with some breaking news.

Ham radio operators in Eastern Canada are being activated once again. This as yet another tropical storm is expected to hit the Maritime Provinces in coming days.

According to Radio Amateurs of Canada, it's expected that Tropical Storm Maria will have a direct impact on Newfoundland, particularly the Avalon Peninsula. Due to a low pressure system that will likely merge, an exact track is difficult to predict. However, in the effected area storm surge, pounding surf, high winds and a unknown amount of rain tht can be expected.

As a result, full activation of a Newfoundland and Labrador Hurricane CANWARN Net will begin at 1430 UTC on Friday, September 17th on 3.740 MHz. Its operation will continue for the duration of the severe weather event. Other amateurs who are within radio range of this net are requested to keep this frequency clear until Hurricane Maria has past the area and net operations are secured. Meantime, hams in the affected area are advised to keep tuned to their local news and weather reports. (RAC)

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YOUNG HAMS: ARRL FORMS YOUTH IN THE SECOND CENTURY COMMITTEE

The ARRL wants to learn more about getting youngsters into ham radio and has formed a special committee to find out how.

According to a Internet posting credited to K0CA, at its July meeting, the ARRL Board of Directors approved a motion authorizing the appointment of a Youth in the Second Century Committee. ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, has since appointed the committee, which is chaired by Rocky Mountain Division Director and former Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Brian Mileshosky, N5ZGT.

The purpose and goals of this committee are to enhance the League's outreach to potential radio amateurs among America's youth. The League's centennial in 2014 will highlight not only the accomplishments of the past but also point towards Amateur Radio's future. The ARRL believes that meaningful plans to excite young Americans about amateur radio today and in the future must take into account the ideas, lifestyles, and experiences of youthful amateur radio operators.

The Committee on Youth in the Second Century will seek input from younger members of ham radio society and also from adult amateurs working with young people., It will make recommendations to the Staff and will report to the Board of Directors beginning in January 2012. (K0CA, UseNet)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W7FP repeater

serving Salt Lake City, Utah.

(5 sec pause here)

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NEWS OF NEWSLINE: AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE JOINS THE HAM NATION TEAM

Amateur radio Newsline is now a weekly feature of Ham Nation on the TWIT TV Internet television network. The announcement was made on the Tuesday evening, September 13th edition when this reporter along with out producer Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, joined Bob Heil, K9EID, and his co-host Gordon West, WB6NOA, to make the announcement:

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K9EID: "Each week we are going to bring a couple of minutes of Newsline to Ham Nation and kind of keep our audience up on some of the top news."

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TWIT TV Network founder Leo LaPorte, W6TWT, was also on hand to welcome us into the Ham Nation family:

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W6TWT: "We are thrilled to have the addition of regular news on this show. What better place to run Newsline than right here.

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After that, I had the honor of doing the first of the weekly 2-minute news capsules live. Ill be there for the next few weeks after which former Newsline anchorman Robert Sudock, WB6FDF, will be taking over the weekly Ham Nation news reports.

If you missed the live show, you can download the podcast and listen or watch. Both can be reached by taking your web browser to www.twit.tv/hn.

And less I forget, speaking for the entire Amateur Radio Newsline team, its great to be a part of Ham Nation. (ARNewsline(tm))

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC FINES LPFM $12000 FOR UNCERTIFIED TRANSMITTER

The FCC has issued a $12,000 Notice of Proposed Liability to Power Ministries' owned low power FM station WRLE (LP), in Dunellon, Florida. This, after a June 2010 investigation of interference to Federal Aviation Administration operations in the near-by city of Jacksonville revealed that the stations transmitter was the source.

After receiving the complaint from the FAA, an FCC agent used direction

finding techniques and traced the interfering signal to the WRLE transmitter. When instructed by the agent to turn off the transmitter the operator on-duty refused to do so. Nor would the station owner authorize it.

The agent then spoke to the station owner on the telephone, reiterating the safety of life hazard and requesting that the station turn off its transmitter. The station owner still refused to do so unless his station engineer was present. Thirty minutes later, the owner himself arrived and allowed a station inspection and then turned off the transmitter.

While waiting for the owner to arrive, the field agent noticed the transmitter wasn't certified. The gear was a CSI exciter, model EX20F and a model FM250E PTEK amplifier. When the transmitter was turned off, the agent said that the spurious emissions and interference to the FAA ceased.

Power Ministries later told the FCC the non-certified transmitter had been used at WRLE from March to June of 2010. It added a certified transmitter was being used as of that July.

Traditionally fined low-power FM stations are only fined in the hundreds of dollars for rule infractions. But in making its decision to fine WRLE $12,000, the commission found the violations were particularly egregious because of the safety issues posed to flights into and out of the Jacksonville area.   (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: NEW MEXICO ALLEGED POLICE JAMMER DINGED $25,000

The FCC has issued a $25,000 Notice of Apparent Liability to Monetary Forfeiture to Esteven J. Gutierrez. This for his alleged jamming of the Las Vegas Police Department's two way radio system. Amateur Radio Newslines's Norm Seeley, KI7UP, has more:

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The story goes back to this past February 15th. That's when an agent from the Enforcement Bureau's San Diego Office arrived with an mobile direction-finding vehicle to investigate, locate, and assist in resolving the interference on 159.150 MHz. .

On his arrival, the FCC agent was briefed by the Las Vegas New Mexico Police Department's Deputy Chief about the situation that included the subject's use of obscenities and threats against police officers and their families. A police sergeant identified the voice as that of to Esteven J. Gutierrez, who was known to the sergeant from prior incidents. The sergeant told FCC agent that he believed that the individual interfering with the dispatch channel was Gutierrez but that he had no known current address.

That evening the subject transmitted on 159.150 MHz making threats to police officers. The San Diego agent, accompanied by the police officers used radio direction-finding techniques and determined that

the signal was mobile and was not transmitting from a fixed location.

On February 16th the subject again began transmitting and the agent again used direction finding and that this time the signal was coming from inside a duplex apartment. The San Diego agent informed the police sergeant of the subjects location. The sergeant along with several other officers identified and observed Gutierrez inside the duplex holding a handheld radio and shortly thereafter apprehended him. The San Diego agent and the police sergeant identified the handheld radio as an Icom model IC-F50, tuned to 159.150 MHz.

And now it appears as if its time for Guiterrez to pay the piper for his purported jamming of the Las Vegas, New Mexico Police communications system. While the combined base forfeiture for this sort of illegal action is $17,000 the rules give the FCC leeway in assessing a proposed fine. In this case the agency says that it finds Gutierrez's alleged misconduct particularly egregious because his unlicensed operation included willful and malicious interference police operations. Based on this the FCC says that an upward adjustment of $8,000 to the combined base forfeiture is warranted. Adding the two amounts together, that's $25,000 that the FCC wants for Guiterrez to pay.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, in Scottsdale, Arizona

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Guiterrez was given the customary 30 days to pay or to file an appeal. (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT REQUIRED: HACKER ISSUES FALSE TERROR REPORTS ON NBC NEWS WEBSITE

Talk about a truly sick joke. On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the 911 terror attacks on New York City and the Pentagon, a hacker gained access to the Twitter account of NBC News and sent out a handful of false tweets about a suspected hijacking and a plane attack at ground zero.

Staffers at NBC noticed the false tweets at around 6 p.m. Eastern time on Friday, September 9th. They quickly contacted Twitter and had the account suspended. NBC News anchor Brian Williams then read a statement on the air saying the reports were false. Several hours later the NBC Twitter account was restored and the false postings were removed.

A group calling themselves Script Kiddies mentioned themselves in the tweets and appeared to be responsible. NBC says that it has contacted authorities including the New York Police Department and FBI about the incident. As we go to air, several investigations are underway. (Published news reports)

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BAND PLANNING: ARRL LOOKING AT SHF BANDPLANS

The ARRL Board has established a committee to update the suggested band plans on 33, 23, 13 and 9cm. If you are active on any of these bands or are using them in any unique ways, please send your e-mail address to Southwest Division Vice-Director Marty Woll, N6VI, who serves on that committee, and he'll let you know how to provide your input to the process. His e-mail is N6VI at arrl dot org. Or you can contact your Division's representative on the group. (ARRL Southwest Div. Communicator)

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RADIO POLITICS: VE3WXM RE-ELECTED RAC DIRECTOR FOR SOUTH ONTARIO

And words of congratulations to Jeffrey Stewart, VA3WXM who was recently re-elected as the Radio Amateurs of Canada Director for Ontario South. Stewart was initially voted in as the Director in May 2011 and has involved in many aspects of the hobby. Stewart's ran unopposed. His new term will cover January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2013. (RAC)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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STUFF FROM SPACE: LOOK OUT BELOW

A NASA official says that the decommissioned Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite is expected to re-enter Earth's atmosphere in an uncontrolled fall in late September or early October. Much of the spacecraft is expected to burn up during re-entry, but some pieces are expected to make it to the ground,

The Amsat News Service says that Leonard David reported in his September 7th Space Insider Column that NASA computer analysis showed about 150 component types, including the parent body of the satellite, will burn during re-entry, but up to 26 would endure the fiery fall to Earth. The analysis indicated a surviving mass of 1,170 pounds will reach Earth within a debris footprint some 500 miles long.

NASA says that the risk to public safety or property is extremely small but admits that there is a chance that pieces of debris from the satellite will crash in areas accessible to the public. It asks that if you find something you think may be a piece of the fallen bird that you do not touch it. Instead, please contact a local law enforcement

official for assistance.

The Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite is 35 feet long, 15 feet in diameter, and weighs 5.7 metric tons. It's operational orbit was at 375 miles inclined at 57 degrees to the equator. The full story of its upcoming demise was published on September 7th on the Space.com website at tinyurl.com/falling-satellite. (AMSAT News Service, Space.com)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: CUBESAT STRAND-1 GETS OPERATING FREQUENCY

The International Amateur Radio Union Satellite Frequency Coordination Panel has agreed a frequency of 437.575 MHz for the UK STRaND-1 CubeSat. This satellite will carry a Smartphone and plans to have a UOSAT style speech synthesizer and a 9600 or 19200 bps AX.25 packet downlink.

STRaND-1 is a 3 unit mini-bird measuring only 30 by 10 by 10 cm. and weighing 4 kg. Unlike previous CubeSats STRaND-1 will feature full 3-axis control with the attitude an orbit control system comprising a nano-magne-torquer, nano-reaction wheels, GPS receiver, 8 pulse plasma thrusters and a butane thruster.

A six page article on STRaND-1 appeared in the Spring issue of OSCAR News available at tinyurl.com/strand-one. (M5AKA)

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VICARIOUSLY IN SPACE: NEW NASA WEB SPACE RIDE ALONG

NASA is giving the public the power to vicariously journey through the solar system using a new interactive Web-based tool. The "Eyes on the Solar System" interface combines video game technology and NASA data to create an environment for users to ride along with agency spacecraft and explore the cosmos. Screen graphics and information such as planet locations and spacecraft maneuvers use actual space mission data. You can begin your ride at solarsystem.nasa.gov/eyes (ANS)

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HAM RADIO AND THE WWW: HAM RADIO DELUXE WILL CONTINUE

Development of the very popular Ham Radio Deluxe software suite will continue. This with word that its current developer, Simon Brown, HB9DRV, has accepted an offer from Mike Carper WA9PIE, Randy Gawtry, K0CBH and Rick Ruhl, W4PC, to purchase the source and rights to it.

Ruhl has blogged via QRZ dot com and Facebook that they plan to continue the development and support of this fine product. Among their plans appear to be a new Digital Desktop for certain Alinco, Icom, Kenwood and Yaesu radios. This would allow the use of a single USB cable to interface with select radios or a full version for MFJ, Kantronics or AEA Terminal Node Controllers. This in turn would permit faster access for emergency communications operators to their Packet TNC's.

As to when a new edition of Ham Radio Deluxe will be made available? Ruhl, who owns W4PC Software says to be please patient. A formal announcement will be forthcoming in the not to distant future. (W4PC via QRZ and Facebook)

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HAM RADIO ON THE WEB: ADIF SEARCH WIDGET AVAILABLE FROM DH9SB

And DH9SB has announced that because more and more DXpeditions use Wordpress, that he has written a widget for Wordpress that can do a search for callsigns in the operations logs. It supports more than one callsign and references. Also, the log can be uploaded as A-D-IF to different electronic logbooks. More information on this software plug-in is available at tinyurl.com/wordpress-widget. (DH9SB)

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WORLBEAT: SOUTH SUDAN TO MOVE ITS CAPITAL CITY

South Sudan's Information Minister Marial Benjamin says the new nation is planning to move its capital from the bustling but crowded city of Juba to a town that offers ample room to expand.

Marial Benjamin released a statement on Sunday, Septembr 3rd that said the government has secured more than 15 square miles of land in the town of Ramciel, which he says lies along the Nile River in Lakes State. The current capital of Juba, in the south, only allocated less than 2 square miles. Benjamin says the plan's implementation will take several years.

Deputy speaker Daniel Awet Akot added the new capital city is located some 150 miles north of Juba. The South Sudan became independent in July after a January referendum. It came to the ham bands with the ST0R DXpedition which racked up over 121,000 QS0's in its time on the air this past July 22nd through August 10th. The ARRL approved the ST0R operation for DXCC credit on August 5th. (Southgate)

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DX

The long awaited 4W6A Timor - Leste DXpedition should be fully operational by the morning of September 17th, UTC time. The team will be active as 4W6A from Atauro Island 160 through 10 meters, using CW, SSB and RTTY with up to four stations simultaneously. MM0NDX is their pilot station for the operation and may be contacted at dxer59 (at) gmail (dot) com. QSL as directed on the DXpedition website at www.4w6a.com.

WB6OJB and K5LBU will once again be active from Lesotho as 7P8JK and 7P8CF, respectively. This, through September 22nd. In their last operation WB6OJB was on the 40 through 10 meters using mostly SSB with some CW. K5LBU will probably be mainly on PSK31 and RTTY. QSL via their home callsigns.

IN3VZE will once again be active from Malawi as 7Q7CE from the shack of his friend 7Q7HB through and October 3rd. His operation will be holiday style on 80 through 10 meters using SSB and RTTY. QSL via his home callsign, by the Bureau or direct.

JK1KSB, will once again be operational as 8Q7SO from Mirihi Island in the Maldives between October 28th and November 4th. His activity will also be holiday style on 80 through 10 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK31. QSL via his home callsign.

N1SNB will be active as 6V7V from La Somone, Senegal during the CQ World Wide DX CW Contest on November 26th and 27th. Outside the contest he plans to be on 160 and 80 meter CW and SSB from November 23rd to the 29th.   QSL via N1SNB.

Lastly, Members of the "Holyland DX Group" will be active as 4X5A from Akhziv Island between 0700 UTC on Friday, October 21st through 1200 UTC on Saturday, October 22nd. Operation will be on 40 through 10 meters using CW and SSB. QSL via 4Z5LA.

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THAT FINAL ITEM: HERE COMES THE BRIDE - ON ATV

And finally this week the story of a couple that will soon be getting married with a world wide audience. This thanks to fast scan amateur television. Robert Broomhead, VK3DN, of the W-I-A News spent some time with the happy couple and learned a lot more:

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Audio report only. To hear it please download the MP3 version of this newscast at www.arnewsline.org

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Our congratulations to Emily and Matthew and thank you for sharing the wonderful day iin your lives with all of us.

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline (at) arnewsline (dot) org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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